Aspira: An Analytical and Historical Case Study of its Organizational Development

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

This study will analyze the historical evolution of one of the oldest and best known Puerto Rican/Latino organizations in North America, Aspira. This study is important because it will provide an historical and analytical perspective on one of the few Puerto Rican/Latino organizations which has survived the environmental challenges of the past thirty five years. It will shed light on the ways ethnically and racially diverse non-profit organizations, mobilize resources in an attempt to empower their communities. It will provide insight on the challenges that these organizations have faced and continue to face in securing and maintaining their niche in North American society.

Statement of the Problem

Aspira is one of the oldest and best known Puerto Rican/Latino organizations in North America. Organizations are products of the social, economic, political and cultural beliefs of a period. They reflect the times in which they are founded and the environment in which they develop. Formed in the early 1960's, Aspira was an outgrowth of the Civil Rights Movement, in North America.

Aspira was created as a vehicle for social change. It wanted to change both the system (educational) and the Puerto Rican people, (through its youth); caught in a cycle of poverty and powerlessness. Its mission and goals reflected its interest in the empowerment of the Puerto Rican community. It carried out its mission by providing advocacy, ethnic pride identification, leadership development and education of its youth.

Although Latinos are the nation's second largest and fastest growing ethnically and racially distinct group, their organizing and empowerment efforts have received little attention in the social work, sociological, or political science literature--in short the social science literature in general (Fraga, Meier and England 1986; Torres and Velazquez 1998). Despite the large number of Puerto Rican and Latino organizations that have been formed in this country, we know very little about their history; leadership; membership; goals; accomplishments; challenges and reasons for survival or demise.

In her book, on Hispanic voluntary associations, Sylvia A. Gonzalez (1985), writes, "Hispanic American populations in the United States have not had the historical origins of their associations systematically documented. And when they have there has been a lack of interest on the part of the majority population to collect and preserve them. Thus, until very recently there have been few library collections dedicated to recording this information" (ix).

Puerto Rican/Latino organization's embody their collective goals and aspirations, their values, culture and vision. There is a pressing need to document and preserve the organizational history's of Puerto Rican/Latino people in North America. This study will address this gap in research on Latino organizations.

Purpose of the Study

This case study will add to the limited body of knowledge that is currently available regarding the formation and evolution of social movement organizations. It will help us to understand how social change organizations perceive and manage their environments-- their adaptations and changes over time.

This case study has a threefold purpose:

First, is to provide an historical analysis of the Aspira organization, focusing on how the social, political, economic, and interorganizational forces in the environment have shaped it as an entity--its adaptations and changes over time.

Second, is to examine how—by what means (strategies), the leadership of Aspira has been able to mobilize resources and achieve legitimation in order to sustain the organization.

Third, is to analyze how the organization has tried to change society and how the societal context has influenced its ability to carry out its empowerment mission as an organization.

Study Propositions

A study's propositions and/or purpose directs the investigator's attention to what should be examined within the scope of the research (Yin, 1993). The following propositions will assist the investigator in guiding the study and maintaining focus on the issue under examination:

Proposition One: As social movement organizations become formalized they may dilute their social movement focus because they are vulnerable and dependent on their environments.

Proposition Two: As social movement organizations become formalized they change and take on other attributes which may affect their mission.

Proposition Three: Social movement organizations utilize various strategies to impact their environments in order to retain their mission and goals.

Research Questions

The following questions guide the research:

1. In what ways has Aspira's organizational history reflected changes in its external environment?

2. How had the leadership of Aspira been able to mobilize resources and achieve legitimacy in order to sustain the organization?

3. What strategies has the organization used to control its environment in order to maintain a more favorable resource flow?

4. What effect has the environment had on the structure, function, and processes of Apira?

5. To what extent have the changes in the external environment forced Aspira to dilute its original mission and goals?

6. To what extent has Aspira been able to empower the Puerto Rican community?

7. To what extent has Aspira made and impact on public policy?

Brief Overview of Aspira

The Aspira organization was formed in 1961, as an outgrowth of an existing Puerto Rican organization in New York City called the Puerto Rican Leadership Forum, PRLF, (Aspira, 1992). Its leadership was comprised of many of the members of the, Hispanic Young Adult Association, HYAA, who challenged the Commonwealth Office's hegemony in the Puerto Rican community. Finding that the statistics on high school dropout rates for Puerto Rican students was alarmingly high, the board decided to create a separate organization to focus on youth leadership through education. It was named Aspira. "Aspira" is a Spanish word for aspire. They wanted the youth to aim high. For a while, the board of Directors of the Forum also served as the board of Aspira. Dr. Antonia Pantoja, a Puerto Rican social worker on the board of the PRLF, was the driving force behind the creation of Aspira. While Aspira was under the Puerto Rican Leadership Forum, Dr. Pantoja became the first director.

By 1962, the organization obtained its own tax exempt status and was in a position to obtain grants on its own. It became a 501(c) 3 and enjoys a double benefit as such. The organization itself escapes taxes and contributions to it provide a tax benefit to the contributor. In 1963, the federal Office of Economic Opportunity and the New York City Economic Opportunity Committee gave the agency a grant to open three borough offices in Brooklyn, upper Manhattan, and the Bronx. Soon the organization was acquiring funding from the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico Office, foundations, and private sources. The borough offices were very successful. They implemented leadership clubs in a large number of high schools, established linkages with local colleges and steadily increased the numbers of students prepared for admission to college. They quickly gained a reputation for recruiting and preparing highly motivated students to enter college.

In 1968, the organization created a National Development Committee to establish what was called then "Aspira of America." The vision was to develop a national organization that could attract funds from a broader range of sources and increase the effectiveness of the organization. The Ford Foundation provided a large grant to assist in the creation of the expansion of Aspira offices in other cities. Between 1968 and 1985, a series of national programs were funded, including the National Health Careers Program, which is still in existence today. This period also marked tremendous growth for the organization. Offices were being opened in other large cities with significant Puerto Rican populations such as Newark, New Jersey, Chicago, Illinois, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, San Juan, Puerto Rico, and later Miami, Florida, and Bridgeport, Connecticut.

During this period, the organization was also trying to work out the organizational tensions that surrounded the role of the national office, vis-à-vis the New York office especially, and the other offices as well. At the 1985 annual meeting, the National Board of Directors voted to relocate the national office to Washington, DC, and to change the name to one that would reflect an image of unity. Ultimately it was changed to Aspira Association, Inc., National Office.

Programmatically, Aspira was becoming known for its ability to recruit and place well-prepared students into college. But it had also become known for its advocacy efforts on behalf of the Puerto Rican community for bilingual education in the schools. It worked closely with the Puerto Rican Legal Defense fund over several years to sue the New York City Board of Education for bilingual education. Finally in 1974, the Consent Decree was signed ordering the New York City Board of Education to implement bilingual programs. This was a landmark decision with national implications. It was revisited in 1989, when the Aspira of New York was able to pressure the New York State Regents to pass a policy mandating renewed compliance with the Consent Decree and to add funds to the bilingual education budget.

Today, Aspira depends on funds from government and foundation sources. It has had modest success in raising funds from alumni and personal donations. It continues to operate in all of the cities where centers have been founded. However, they are constantly challenged by the social, economic, and political environment they operate in. This investigation will shed light on the challenges that the organization has faced and the solutions it has developed to meet these over the years.

Contextual Issues Surrounding Organizational Founding and Development

Introduction

In order to understand the Aspira organization, historical and contextual issues of the time must be discussed. It is critical to address the "historical moment" (Rodriguez 1991, p. 85), of the founding and early development of the organization, including the unique history of the Puerto Rican migration, the conditions the Puerto Rican migrants faced upon arrival, and the political, economic and cultural tenor of the times.

A   Brief History of Puerto Rican Migration Since the turn of the century Puerto Ricans have been migrating to the U.S. to seek employment opportunities and an improved standard of living. In the years following War II, the Puerto Rican migration to the United States reached massive proportions. Post war immigration laws virtually put an end to the admission of Europeans (Handlin, 1959). This allowed for Puerto Ricans from the island and Blacks, migrating from southern rural areas, to move north to the cities, to seek employment and what they perceived would be a better way of life (Glazer & Moynihan, 1970). The 1940 census counted only 70,000 persons of Puerto Rican extraction living on the U.S. mainland, by 1950 the number had increased to more than 300,000 and by 1960 to nearly 900,000 (Lopez, 1984). By the 1950s, Puerto Ricans comprised the largest Latino population in New York City, and on the Eastern seaboard. They were also among the poorest. They occupied low paying jobs, lived in substandard housing, encountered barriers to education due to language differences, faced racial discrimination, and lacked political representation or political clout as a community. In addition, they had large families. by 1964, of the Puerto Ricans living in poverty 61.9 percent were in family constellations of five or more members, as opposed to 17.5 percent of poor white families (Puerto Rican Forum Study, 1970. p. 14).

Of major significance, was the fact that Puerto Ricans were the youngest ethnic and racially distinct group in the city More than 47 percent of the males and 45 percent of the females were under 20 years of age in 1960 In contrast, only 38 8 per cent of the males and 34 9 percent of the female non-whites (blacks), were in the same age category The proportion of youth among the non-whites was even smaller--28 6 per cent of the males and 26 per cent of the females (Ibid p 16) This large proportion of youth in the community was an important target for the Aspira organization founders

B   Relegation to the Secondary Job Market

One of the major problems confronting the community was limited employment opportunities Puerto Ricans entered the secondary labor market in disproportionate numbers The secondary labor market includes jobs that are low in pay, prestige, and security, and offer little opportunity for acquiring skills or advancing They do not encourage stable work habits and have high turnover and weak or nonexistent unions Such occupations include fast food workers day care workers, bus and taxi drivers assembly line workers, and restaurant employees (Johnson, 1995, p 153)

The timing of the entry of the mass of Puerto Ricans to New York City and their relegation to a declining sector of the work force placed them in a very weak economic position inhibiting their ability to identify and mobilize resources to organize for collective gain

C. Early Puerto Rican Organizing Efforts

Sanchez Korrol (1983) traced the development of Puerto Rican organizations in New York City. As early as the 1930's, Puerto Ricans were forming groups, which were at that time organized as "home town clubs," such as "Los Hijos de San Juan," Sons of San Juan. These groups comprised persons who came from certain towns and who would connect with others arriving from the same towns or regions.

Information about jobs and available apartments and celebrations were some of the social supports these groups provided. These home town organizations sprung up all around the city, concentrated mostly in Brooklyn and Manhattan. These home town organizations were early attempts at organizing supportive self help groups for Puerto Ricans, but they were only sporadically involved in politics.

D. Back and Forth Migration

A unique issue affecting the Puerto Rican community is its "back and forth" migration pattern. Puerto Ricans have been U.S. citizens since 1917. They began to migrate to the New York City in the 1930s and 1940s and were the first airborne migration. Puerto Ricans came to America with the idea that they would find a job, earn and save money, and return to the island. However, what happened to Puerto Ricans in reality was quite different from their expectations.

Statistics show that a very small percentage of Puerto Ricans actually realize their dream of returning to the island. In fact, there are large numbers of Puerto Ricans who tried to go back, only to find that things there have changed, their children born here speak poor Spanish and are considered "New York Ricans," and the idealized country way of living is no longer possible (Lopez, 1990).

E. The "Visitor Mentality"

Related to the "back and forth migration" but more politically significant, is the "visitor mentality" coined by Jennings and Rivera (1984). They characterize the Puerto Rican community in New York City before World War II as having the

mentality of a "visitor," not one of a permanent citizen who must set down roots and succeed in America

According to Jennings and Rivera, (1984), the visitor mentality was, in part, a product of U S policy toward Puerto Rico

The mass migration from Puerto Rico was induced by the United States, in order to provide cheap labor for industries in New York City during periods of waning European immigration In a sense, the lives of Puerto Ricans were economically manipulated to 'force them to come to New York City This is one explanation for the imposition of the Jones Act (1917) [the act that made Puerto Ricans citizens], on a country that had officially rejected U S citizenship (p 5)

European immigrants came to New York hoping to become citizens, while Puerto Ricans came as migrant workers

The Irish, the Jews, and the Italians came not only for the economic opportunities but also in many cases in search of a new home The Puerto Rican on the other had, did not come seeking a new home but came only looking for a job Puerto Rican migrants did not perceive of themselves as American citizens who could demand equal treatment before the law These migrants saw themselves more as mere workers in someone else's country The ties to the homeland were never quite severed (Jennings and Rivera, p 5) There were only a few instances of Puerto Rican political participation before World War II, including the mobilization of the Puerto Rican electorate in the early 1930's, around Congressman James Lanzetta and later

Congressman Vito Marcantonio, both representatives of the East Harlem district, and the election of Oscar Garcia Rivera to the New York State Assembly in 1937. Jennings and Rivera have characterized Puerto Rican electoral participation before World War II, as "umbilicalism" or the tendency to view politics within the context of political issues pertinent to Puerto Rico. This mentality severely limited political and electoral involvement.

F   Competition with Other Groups

According to Glazer and Moynihan (1970), New York City policies are driven by ethnic and race relations. By the 1930s, most immigrant groups had already formed their own special institutions and organizations to ensure their survival.

Jews had organized powerful voluntary agencies and hospitals, and Catholics (controlled by Irish and Italian groups) had also made inroads into the established system by organizing their own hospitals and agencies. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was formed in 1909-10 and the National Urban League was established in 1911 (Morales, 1979, p 97)

Handlin (1959) and Litt (1970), indicated that distinctive religious and ethnic characteristics of these institutions eventually faded and trained professionals and bureaucrats have taken charge of once ethnic institutions under the auspices of the government. At the time of arrival of the Puerto Rican migration, the state had assumed many of the social responsibilities

that before the 1930s been the domain of self-help ethnic institutions For the Puerto Rican the creation of ethnic institutions at this time was almost impossible The Puerto Rican migrants lacked the financial support, skills and clout necessary to mobilize resources to organize powerful agencies or institutions.

G   Island/Commonwealth Government Control of Puerto Rican Community

Sanchez Korrol's (1983) study points out a critical fact about the organizational development of the Puerto Rican community in New York City post World War II, the period of the "Great Migration" of Puerto Ricans to the mainland In 1947, an Office of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, was established in Manhattan, by the Puerto Rican Legislature It quickly became identified as a chief representative of Puerto Rican interests, on the mainland It took on a major role in the lives of the Puerto Ricans in New York City and the region

It however, was an island government (Puerto Rico) entity No other group had ever been represented by an office from the homeland on North American so. Its origins were not universally viewed as contradictory, especially by the many migrants who expected to return to Puerto R co at some point At first it did not seem odd that a governmental body from the island would be their spokesperson here in New York For them, the agency counterbalanced an unfriendly, cold American society and, perhaps too because of its quasi political visibility, the agency became an acceptable broker In addition, the agency had the distinction of being Puerto Rican operated and connected to the island Others who were committed to the advancement of Puerto Ricans on the mainland did not object to

the agency's role precisely because one of its mandates was to work with existing community groups and to encourage the development of leadership among stateside Puerto Ricans (Sanchez Korrol p 225) Yet, Martin (1975) found in his study of Puerto Rican leadership that this office played little if any, role in nurturing Puerto Rican leadership in New York City

The Hispanic Young Adult Association (HYAA) exemplifies the kind of group created and supported by the Migration Division This group focused on the interests of young professionals and college students HYAA, according to Sanchez Korrol (1983), advanced the assimilationist view that it believed had worked so well for other ethnic groups They ascribed to the notion that "science and effective social intervention would eventually solve society's ills," (p 226) Sanchez Korrol points out that many among the leadership were trained social workers

According to Sanchez Korrol (p 226), the HYAA was among the first Puerto Rican organizations to base its mission on the culture and ideology of *stateside* Puerto Ricans The organization aspired to create a leadership committed to integration, rather than concerns of the island

However, by 1956, the commitment to issues of identity motivated the HYAA to reject assimilation, define itself as Puerto Rican and rename itself the Puerto Rican Association for Community Affairs (PRACA) They began to see that the Puerto Rican community faced barriers that the European immigrant groups before them had not faced the ethnic assimilationist view did not work for them There were at least two generations of Puerto Ricans on the mainland by now, and the conditions were worsening not improving

According to Sanchez Korrol (1983), the Puerto Rican Leadership Forum, Inc surfaced later in 1957, to challenge the domination of the Migration Division This organization emulated the NAACP and the American Jewish Committee. It aimed for citywide recognition as the power broker for the Puerto Rican community One of the leaders of this group was Antonia Pantoja, she promoted community enterprises and the provision of funding for other local organizations to develop their own programs Antonia Pantoja is the founder and first director of Aspira

H   The Puerto Rican Movement

The decade of the '60s was a pivotal period of organizing by disenfranchised groups Like other groups Hispanic communities took on a more activist and sometimes radical approach to organizing their communities for empowerment Both the external, national climate and certain trends in the Puerto Rican community itself, supported it

For Puerto Ricans, as Jennings and Rivera (1984) pointed out, two developments after World War II began to weaken the "escapist" attitudes of Puerto Ricans in the United States "Escapist" attitudes according to Jennings and Rivera, refers to the lack of commitment and involvement by Puerto Ricans in American electoral and political affairs First, it was becoming clearer, especially after the commonwealth status for Puerto Rico was established for the island in the early 1950s, that Puerto Rican independence would become increasingly difficult under American foreign policy The second was the critical mass now living in the U S who found it increasingly difficult to return to Puerto Rico The reality was

beginning to set in that this was their home and that they had to organize within the political and economic context of urban America. "During this period, Puerto Ricans stopped thinking of themselves as migrants and started think.ng of themselves as citizens" (Jennings & Rivera, 1984, p.11)

During the 1960s community control, civil rights, women's rights and other activist type movements were proliferating. Simultaneously, government under the "War on Poverty" programs, as well as, foundations and professional organizations also became involved in supporting these social movement organizations (McCarthy & Zald, 1987). The ideals of freedom, equality, justice, and empowerment were very much a part of the rhetoric of the Young Lords Party in East Harlem and El Barrio, a radical political Puerto Rican youth group which espoused "power to the people," a slogan advanced by the Black Panther Party a radical organization of African-Americans, after which the Young Lords were patterned.

It was during this period that Puerto Rican and other Latino groups all over the country were able to call attention to the problems in their communities. Organizations were able to form and receive grants from governmental and private foundation sources to support their causes (Weisbrod, 1988). How one of these institutions has fared in subsequent decades when the environmental factors around them have changed dramatically, is the subject of this investigation.

1   Education of the Youth

By 1960, three out of every ten Puerto Ricans were being born on the mainland Approximately 88 percent of the Puerto Ricans were living in New

York City (The Puerto Rican Study, 1970, p 16) It was the group with the youngest median age, younger than Blacks and Whites The future of the community was clearly in youth development Yet, according to the seminal study done by the Puerto Rican Forum in 1964, Puerto Rican children were faring poorly in the school system They had the lowest achievement and highest drop out rates The aspirations of the youth was very low

The opportunity to educate the young people so that they could go forward and become leaders who could develop power and economic support for the community became a key issue Education became a rallying point for the Puerto Rican community, one which would allow for coalitions with other more powerful groups to advance their cause

J Assimilation vs. Acculturation

During the 50's and early 60's sociologists began to reevaluate the prevailing assimilation paradigm This model held, that just like the European immigrants before them, the Puerto Ricans and Blacks would assimilate and enter the mainstream of American life after a few generations (Gordon 1964, Glazer and Monyihan, 1970) By the late 1960's, it became clear that despite severa, generations, Puerto Ricans and Blacks were not being absorbed into the American mainstream at the same rates as their European predecessors This discrepancy became the subject of great debate and controversy The theme of acculturation versus assimilation became a predominant one in sociology, politics and education This theme became a philosophical public policy debate in terms of how programs would be designed, particularly bilingual education programs Should the programs

be designed as "mainstream" or "maintenance" programs Should they teach English at the expense of the native (Spanish) language and culture (the assimilationist view) or should they try to maintain and preserve the child's language and culture while trying to teach English, (the pluralist acculturationist view)? What role does mainstream Anglo-American culture play? What role does the native (Puerto Rican culture and language), play in these programs? These issues pervaded politics, education, social service provision it impacted all spheres of life

It was clear that the Office of Commonwealth of Puerto Rico ascribed to the assimilationist view They held that adoption of U S mores and middle class values was the key to success in America The leadership of PRACA the spin-off group originated by the Office of the Commonwealth did not ascribe to the assimilationist philosophy, rather they were acculturationists They believed that Puerto Ricans should not have to shed their Puerto Ricanness in order to get ahead They believed that in a pluralistic society groups should retain their language and cultural values while at the same time learn English and mainstream societal values

Relevance of Topic to Social Work

The social work method of community organization has been concerned with efforts to mobilize people who are directly affected by social conditions into groups and organizations, and enable them to take action on the social problems and issues that concern them A typical feature of these efforts is the concern with building new organizations among people who have not been previously organized to take social action

on a problem (Rivera & Erlich 1995). However, there are serious gaps in the analyses of
such organizations and their activities. This case study will address that gap.

This study will enrich social work research and practice by focusing on an area
which has not been receiving adequate attention - the question of how disenfranchized
groups come together to develop collective strategies for empowerment through building
and sustaining organizations. This case study is important because it will shed light on how
a vulnerable group has organized in an effort to empower itself and have an impact on the
larger society in America. The study has implications for research, policy and practice.

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Chapter II

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

The Literature on organizations is vast. Organizations have been written about and studied as both a specialized field within sociology and a focus of multidisciplinary research and training (Scott 1992). This review will focus on four key areas. These are 1) voluntary associations, social movement organizations and resource mobilization, 2) organizational theories, including: a) resource dependence theory, and b) institutional theory, 3) leadership from an organizational culture perspective, and 4) empowerment.

These perspectives will be examined here in an attempt to provide a theoretical and conceptual framework for the organizational analysis of ASPIRA in its historical, social, and political context.

Voluntary Associations

Voluntary organizations of all types have always flourished in America. They are part of our Democratic tradition. The literature on voluntary organizations has confirmed what Alexis de Tocqueville observed more than 150 years ago. Americans are a nation of joiners (Sills, 1957, Brilliant, 1995). Voluntary associations have become an integral part of our way of life and have assumed major responsibility for numerous basic social functions (Payne, Payne & Reddy, 1972).

A major function of voluntary associations is to expose and investigate the correction of the state and other associations--especially to correct their violations of law and order, and to broaden the conceptions of justice and equality (James Luther Adams, 1972, p xvi)

Voluntary organizations are usually in the forefront of social change and innovation as well as play a major role in preserving cultures, artifacts, ideologies and symbols of the past contributing to the maintenance of our cultural heritage of diversity (Smith, D. H. 1972b)

Characteristics of Volunteers in America--Income and Education

The literature on voluntary associations indicates that there is a significant correlation between socioeconomic status and volunteerism. Virtually all studies report that higher income and higher levels of education is markedly associated with greater membership, participation and leadership in voluntary associations (Smith 1983, Payne et al 1972, Hyman & Wright, 1971, Rogers, Bultena & Barb, 1975)

Conversely, all studies report that individuals in lower socioeconomic groups tend to have few or no affiliations. Religion is often one of the principal ways that poor people participate (Payne et al 1972)

Voting and Political Participation

Many researchers have studied the relationship of voting behavior and voluntary membership and have found that members of organizations are more likely to vote and participate in politics (Rogers et al 1975, Milbrath and Goel 1977, Sigelman, Roeder, Jewell & Baer, 1985, Wolfinger & Rosenstone 1980, Krysan & D'Antonio, 1992)

Racial and Ethnic Participation

Historically, European immigrants groups have utilized voluntary associations as a way to achieve economic and political hegemony. There has been little systematic study of ethnic voluntary associations or patterns of membership and participation of ethnics (Payne et al p 223). The literature that is available is scattered in various disciplines.

Ethnic organizations exert their influence by reinforcing common group consciousness, through the effect of common antecedents and cultural and linguistic traditions. This allows members to view developing issues from a common frame for political and social change (Glazer and Monyihan, 1970, p 168).

Although an increasingly large body of data exists on the membership, participation rates and patterns of Black Americans, little attention has been focused on the rates and patterns of Asians, American Indians and Hispanics (Payne et al 1972). One recent study on the numbers and functions of nonprofit organizations within the California Hispanic community indicates a notable expansion in numbers and kinds of nonprofit groups dedicated to cultural, economic and political concerns (Koldewyn 1992).

Studies on the effect of race on voluntary association membership show mixed findings (Krysan and D'Antonio, 1992). Several studies have made special note of high rates of black participation in religious and church groups (Argyle 1959, Babchuk and Thompson 1962, and Orum 1966). Orum (1966), who replicated previous studies, confirmed higher rates of black participation in political organizations and civic groups.

Babchuk and Thompson (1962), concluded that restricted access to mainstream, status lending organizations, has lead blacks to create their own social organizations.

Sanchez (1996), supports this conclusion. In commenting on a study done by Cohen and Kaplan (1978), which reported that black women were more active in voluntary associations compared to whites and Puerto Ricans of both sexes and were more active than black men. Sanchez argued that what Puerto Ricans lack, is not a participatory culture, but supportive and autonomous institutions, such as the black church. It is an institutional rather than a cultural deficiency that limits political participation among Puerto Ricans male and female. (Sanchez 1996, p 268).

This position is echoed by other Hispanic authors on the issue of political and organizational participation patterns of Hispanics. They reject the underlying assumption in the literature that Hispanics are not active in political and voluntary associations due to some "culturally" based reasons. They argue that racism, political exclusion and structural barriers are the root of the problem (Sanchez 1996, Vidareal, Hernandez & Neighbor, 1988, Vigil, 1974).

Literature on Puerto Rican Voluntary Associations

Historian, Oscar Handlin (1951, 1959) studied patterns of association and adaptation of American immigrant groups including Puerto Ricans. Chenault 1938, Padilla 1958, Senior 1961, Fitzpatrick 1971 and Moynihan and Glazer 1970, have also done studies which provide brief glimpses of organizing behavior of Puerto Ricans. None focused specifically on the organizing patterns of Puerto Ricans until 1983, with the publication of From Colonia to Community, by Virginia E. Sanchez Korro. This history traces the early Puerto Rican migration to New York City and provides a detailed insight on the many early voluntary organizations the Puerto Rican community formed. She indicates

that direct community involvement centered on the sponsorship projects or activities appealing to general Hispanic community

Sanchez Korrol's study reinforces the theme that early voluntary organizations were vehicles for self-help and political involvement and that the leadership stemmed from the more educated and sophisticated segments of the population She concludes that Puerto Rican's political awareness and participation was much greater than previously assumed Other studies confirmed this finding (Rodriguez-Fraticelli and Tirado, 1989, Haslip-Viera and Baver, 1996) It appears that while many associations were organized and incorporated, few were able to survive over time Little is available institutional evolution of Puerto Rican organizations

Social Movements

Social movements involve activities on the part of organized groups to effect some change in or innovation in society Movements arise from conditions which are perceived to be problematic, from the changing social. order, and or from changing values and norms

Traditional social movement theory sought to explain the emergence of protest with the grievances felt by protesters (Smelser, 1962, Turner and Kilian 1957,
Schutt 1986) These grievance based theories have differed in the extent to which they emphasize rational or less rational bases for grievances and interests in the collective vs collective interests These theories share an emphasis on the motivations of the participants themselves Though there is still an ongoing debate (Piven and Cloward 1977) in recent years, sociologists seeking explanations for the emergence of protest organizations have focused on the level of resources available to them and their successful mobilization for collective gain (Schutt, 1986, p 3)

Sills (1968), describes three phases in the life cycle of a social movement

1) the recipient phase, in which a handful of believers works towards a goal established by the founder (often a charismatic leader), 2) the organizational phase, in which voluntary associations are established, and 3) the stable phase, in which the voluntary associations (if they survive) become increasingly professionalized, bureaucratic and conservative (p.367)

Thus, voluntary organizations are often the institutional expressions of social movements MCCarthy and Zald (1977), define social movement as a set of opinions and beliefs in a population representing preferences for changing some elements of the social structure or reward distribution or both of a society, (p 20) McCarthy and Zald (1987) defined a social movement organization, (SMO), as a complex or formal organization, that identifies its goals with the preferences of a social movement or a counter-movement and attempts to implement those goals (p 20) The movement in this case is the Puerto Rican movement (Lopez 1973, Torres and Velazquez 1998) an outgrowth of the civil rights movement of the 1960's The social movement organization is ASPIRA

Organizational theory

Resource Mobilization Perspective of Social Movement Organizations

The sociological theory that most clearly removes the study of social movements from a concern with individual and collective grievances into a concern with organizational structure is resource mobilization This perspective differentiates between a social movement and a social movement organization The resource mobilization perspective of social movements views social movement organizations as structures This view emphasizes the resources, beyond membership, consciousness and manpower, that may

become available to potential movements. McCarthy and Zald (1987), argue that a fundamental reason for the development of social movements is the confluence of "resource availability, the preexisting organization of preference structures and entrepreneurial attempts to meet preference demand (p 337). This approach focuses on the organization's ability to mobilize resources--money, people and legitimacy (Tilly 1978). It assumes that material resources (people and money) and symbolic resources (shared values, norms, legitimacy) are available and can be tapped when needed, without the agents of social control preventing their access.

Using the broadest and most inclusive definition, a social movement includes all who in any form support the general ideas of the movement. Social movements contain social movement organizations, the carrier organizations that consciously attempt to coordinate and mobilize supporters (McCarthy and Zald, 1987, p 339) The resource mobilization perspective examines the variety of resources that must be tapped, the linkages to other groups, the dependence on externa, support, and the strategies used by authorities to control or incorporate movements and mobilize supporters.

Basic Premises of Resource Mobilization Perspective

According to McCarthy and Zald (1977), there are five premises that are central to the resource mobilization perspective First the study of the aggregation of resources and (money and labor) is crucial to an understanding of social movement activity Groups must gather resources in order to engage in collective social change Second, the aggregation of resources necessitates some form of organization Third, involvement of individuals and organizations from outside the social movement influences its success or failure Fourth, a supply and demand model is applied to the flow of resources toward and away from

specific social movement organizations. Social movements are dependent upon the resources available in the environment. Fifth, costs and rewards are important in explaining individual participation and organization involvement. Individuals participate when costs are limited and rewards are high. The structure of society and the activities of the authorities determine costs and rewards.

The study of the ASPIRA organization will look at the resources mobilized by the organizers in founding, developing and maintaining the organization and the costs involved in mobilizing these resources

Resource Dependence Theory

The resource dependence perspective focuses on the organization itself and the strategies that it uses in changing and adapting to its environment. It is based on the premise that it is not possible to understand the behavior of an organization or its relations with other organizations without understanding the context within which it operates. This organizational paradigm stresses adaptation. It assumes that an organization can act to increase its chances of survival (Scott 1992). It stresses that organizations take an active rather than passive role in controlling their environment.

The resource dependence perspective begins with the premise that no organization can internally generate all of the resources necessary to survive. This perspective also called the political, economy theory focuses on the external, and internal, economic and political processes, that shape the character of the whole organization, as well as its components (Zald 1970, Wamsley and Zald 1973). According to Zald (1970 p 223) [it] is the study of the interplay of power, the goals of the powerwielders, and the productive exchange

system " Internal and external interest groups who have control over the political and economic resources an organization needs, strive to maximize their interests.

According to Hasenfeld (1983) the central dynamic that governs organization environment interactions can be illuminated in the following proposition:

"The greater the dependence of the organization on any given element in the task environment and the less the countervailing power, the greater the influence of that element on the organization and the greater its ability to dictate the terms of the exchange (p 68). To reduce vulnerability organization utilize various strategies to improve their power dependence relations. The choice of strategies will be decided by 1) the concentration or dispersion of needed resources, and 2) the amount of strategic resources it controls (Hasenfeld 1983).

The strategies that the Aspira organization has used over the years will be traced using Pfeffer and Salancik's (1978) model of organizational change and adaptation. This paradigm emphasizes the variety of options developed by organizations to deal with and shape their environments

Tactics and Strategies for Changing Power Dependence

According to Pfeffer and Salancik (1978), the key to organizational survival is the ability to acquire and maintain resources. They state that problems arise not only because organizations are dependent on their environment for resources but because the environment is not dependable (Pfeffer and Salanckik, p 3). In their view, there are several key concepts which can are important for understanding the effects of environments on organizations and the effects of organizations on environments

First, organizational effectiveness is an external standard of how well an organization is meeting the demands of the various groups and organizations that are concerned with its activities. They argue that effectiveness is a socio-political question. It is an assessment of the usefulness of what is being done and the resources that are being consumed to do it. This does not imply that the organization is at the mercy of outsiders. The organization manipulates, influences and creates acceptability for itself and its activities (p.11)

Organizational efficiency is an internal standard of performance. Efficiency involves doing better what the organization is currently doing, external pressures on the organization are often (mistakenly) defined internally as requests for greater efficiency.

Secondly, every event in the environment does not necessarily affect an organization. There are two major reasons why organizations do not respond to every event in the environment. One, is that it may be buffered or isolated from them and two, they do not pay attention to every event, nor are all events important to an organization. Loose coupling, as opposed to tight connectedness, to other organizations is an important safety device for an organization's survival. Organizational information systems provide the information on which organizational decisions and choices are made. The kind of information the organization has about its environment will also vary with its connections to the environment. Organizational members serve on boards of d rectors, commissions, and are members of associations and various other organizations. Also organizations send representatives to governmental hearings, monitor current research and investigate current relevant information. The ways in which an organization learns about, attends to, selects

and processes information to give meaning to its environment, are all important aspects of how the context of an organization affects its actions.

According to Pfeffer and Salancik (1978), constraint is a third basic concept for understating organizational environment relationships. They posit that actions can be said to be constrained whenever one response to a given situation is more probable than any other response to the situation. Constraint is present whenever responses to a situation are not random. Although constraints may seem undesirable, in most cases action is not possible without constraints which can facilitate the choice and decision process (pp. 14-15). The behavior or organizations is constrained by the interests of others, government, consumers, unions and competitors.

Managing the Environment

Pfeffer and Salancik (1978), posit that organizations use various strategies to manage their environment. They use compliance or adaptive strategies as well as avoidance and co-optation. In managing the organization's institutional environment the focus shifts from organizational efficiency to organizational effectiveness and legitimacy. Negotiation, political strategies and the management of the organization's interorganizational relationships are critical to the maintenance of its legitimacy and effectiveness in the environment.

Strategies for Avoiding Influence/Compliance

Organizations forestall a loss of autonomy by using sequential attention to the conflicting demands (Cyert and March 1963). Instead of satisfying one group at the expense of another the organization may attend to one set of demands at one point and some other set later, when they become more pressing (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978, p. 96).

Another tactic for balancing demands is to play one group off against another. An example given indicated that unions were blamed for the inability to hire minorities when the Federal government pressured the company (op. cit.).

Avoidance

Pfeffer and Salancik (1978), indicate that organizations may avoid demands by controlling the extent to which interest groups have access to communication channels. Staff persons may deliberately route individuals away from their superiors. Additionally organizations may convene meetings at inconvenient times to air demands or pack them with supporters to reframe the issues.

Controlling Definition of Satisfaction and Demands

Both interest groups and organizations have discretion in defining whether a demand is satisfied. The focal organization has some control over the interpretation of outcomes and may direct its behavior as it wants while contending that the demands have been satisfied (Pfeffer & Salancik, p 99).

Additionally, another source of discretion for the focal organization is to actually take part in the formulation of the interest group's demands. This can be done by professionalization and self regulation, involvement and setting standards and regulatory policies and advertising and other merchandising. The discretion allowed organizations because of an interest group's reliance on them for their expertise is partly due to the costs or resources that would be needed by others to develop similar expertise (Pfeffer & Salancik, p 101).

Additionally, information control is a method for both the exercise and avoidance of influence. The public interest or confidentiality may be asserted in the contest over

information availability these arguments used selectively to enhance the interest of those raising the argument (Ibid p 106)

Managing and avoiding dependence

Confronted by powerful external forces organizational avoidance may no longer be possible The nature and amount of interdependence felt by the organization determines the form organizational adaptations take The two major determinants of interorganizational power are 1) the focal organization's dependence on important critical resource exchanges and 2) the control which other organizations have over the exchange of that resource

Pfeffer an Salancik (1978), posit that there are two broadly contingent adaptive responses an organization can take 1) to adapt and change to fit the environmental requirements or 2) alter the environment to fit the organization

There are five major strategies that organizations can take in avoiding resource dependence and control put forth by Pfeffer and Salancik. 1978 First, buffering or finding alternative sources of supply or resources may be used Second, antitrust suits (usually used by corporations), or other legal means may be used to eliminate the concentration of resources, as seen in recently in the computer industry against Microsoft Third, the organization can diversify it products and programs in order to diminish criticality of the resource Fourth, co optation or bringing in members of the controlling organization to sit on the board of directors, advisory panel and exchange of personnel can be used to diminish control Finally, mergers or acquisitions with controlling organizations may be used as a strategy

Institutional Theory

According to Scott 1995, the "new" Institutional theory has developed rapidly since the 1970's (Scott 1994). Meyer and Rowan 1977, Zucker 1983, Hannan and Freeman 1984, and DiMaggio and Powell 1991, have emphasized various institutiona. parad.gms

Prior to these new institutional theories, Philip Se.znick (1957), in his seminal work defined institutionalization itself as a process. His conception of institutional.zat.on has been used and debated by many of the later theorists, yet it stands apart because it preceded contemporary institutional perspectives and focused on the institution itself. As Selznick states "{the organization} is deemed to have basic needs, essentially related to self-maintenance; the system develops repetitive means for self defense, and day to day activity is interpreted in terms of the function served by that activity" (1957, p 29).

Institutionalism as defined by Selznick

In his seminal work, Leadership and Administration, (1957), Philip Selznick, defines institutionalization as a *process*. It is someth ng that happens over time, reflecting the organizations history and the people in it, the groups it embodies and the vested interests they have created, and the way it has adapted to its environment (p 16). He states that to "institutionalize" is *to infuse with value* beyond the technical requirements of the task at hand (Ibid, p 17)

From the standpoint of socia. systems rather than persons, organizations become inf.ised with value as they come to symbolize the community's aspirations. its sense of identity. Some organizations perform this function more readily and fully that others. An organization that does take on this symbolic meaning has some claim on the community to avoid liquidation or transformation on purely techn.ca. or economic grounds (Ib.d p 19)

Selznick pos.ts that as organizations become infused with value they are no .onger expendable tools. They develop a concern for self maintenance. In the process they take on a distinctive identity, and character. The maintenance of the organization goes beyond survival, to preserve a unique set of values becomes a major focus. Organizational leadership plays a pivotal role in defining and defending these values (Scott 1995)

Selznick a.so indicates that organizations with more precise goals or better defined technologies are less subject to institutional.zat.on than those with diffuse goals and weak technologies (p 19)

In his case study of the Tennessee Valley Authority, Selznick (1949), traces the strategies that are used by the organization to gain legitimacy and po.itical support for its programs. Through a historical analysis of the organization's change and adaptation he demonstrates the d.splacement of the organization's goals. Co-optation of external leaders was used as a mechanism to ga.n support. Local leaders exchanged support for influence on the agency's programs and goals, this resu.ted in the subversion of some public interest goals to private interests.

Se.znick's approach was ut.lized by a number of other investigators including Gusfield (1955) who studied the evolution of Women's Temperance Union, Sills (1957) who studied the transformation of the Nat ona. Foundat.on for Infant.le Paralysis to the March of Dimes. Zald (1970), studied the YMCA in .ts transformation from a religious organization providing services for the urban poor to a social and recreational center for suburban middle class young persons.

Other Views of Institutionalization

Meyer and Rowan (1977), wrote that legitimacy is a consequence of organizational conformity with institutional myths, and that institutional myths are derived from the culture. Organizational survival is dependent on the ability of an organization to gain and maintain legitimacy and control over its resources. The ability to increase resources is dependent on its ability to incorporate societally legitimated rationalized elements in their formal structures. They posit that in modern societies organizations are likely to take the form of "rationalized myths". They are myths because they are widely held beliefs than cannot be objectively tested but they are true because they are believed. They may not be true, but power comes from belief in them. They are rationalized because they take the form of rules specifying procedures that organizations adopt in order to comply with what is believed to be acceptable practice. Meyer and Rowan argue that these institutional belief systems shape organizational forms.

Meyer and Scott (1983) argue that the structure of U.S. public schools as resulting from the system's managers adopted widely understood institutional structures and practices in an effort to legitimate their organizations.

DiMaggio and Powell 1983, also point to "institutional isomorphism" as an important process in organizational adaptation. They posit that change occurs through either coercive isomorphism (as a result of political influences), normative isomorphism (insp. red by ongoing professionalization), and mimetic isomorphism (generated by standard responses to uncertainty). There are several causes of isomorphic change. First, increasing interaction between organizations, two, the need for clearly defined inter organizational structures of dominance and patterns of coalition may be involved, three, increasing and fast changing information flows from the environment into the organization which has to be

processed and fourth, the awakening of consciousness, that although people are working for different organizations, they are all involved in a common enterprise (Batelaan 1994, DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Both technical and institutional environments shape organizational forms and influence organizations, behavior. Institutional fields shape institutional interests.

The institutionalization of the Aspira organization will be analyzed as a process and the causes and mechanisms through which the process occurs will be addressed in the study.

Leadership

Leadership is critical to the emergence, founding, development and ongoing effectiveness of any organization. Leadership, from an institution building perspective, is defined as "the group of persons actively engaged in the formulation of the doctrine and program of the institution and who direct its operations and relationships with the environment" (Siffin, 1972, p.114).

Zald and Ash (1966) discuss the concept of leadership as part of the process of forming social movement organizations, (SMO's). Charismatic leadership emerges at the founding when it is important to attract followers and gain support for the goals and values of the movement.

Weber (1968) and Michaels (1915), posit that once a social movement emerges through leadership of a charismatic person, the bureaucratization of the social movement begins to take hold. Charismatic leadership is then replaced by more bureaucratically oriented leaders who are geared to organizational maintenance and the sustainment of group norms. This leads to the "iron law of oligarchy" (Michaels 1915) where the social

movement usually through an SMO develops into a bureaucratic structure within the society

Zald and Ash 1987, argue that the Weber Michels models are incomplete They use Selznick's process model of institutional change to analyze SMO's. They recognize that changes in leadership may be responses to environmental changes and to needs within the organization Charisma is often replaced by a different form of authority, one more responsive to the need of the SMO to be institutionalized Through the process of legitimation and reordering of the social movement or social movement organization, an entirely new concept of leadership may emerge which is a synthesis of both pure and routinized charisma

Weber (1968) wrote about the tension between the routine and the creativity of social institutions Social movement organizations are good illustrations of this tension as they move from emotional appeal toward institutionalization

Leadership from an Organizational Culture Perspective

Schein (1994) believes that organizational cultures begin with leaders who impose their own values and assumptions on a group If the group is successful and these assumptions are adopted into the group s value system, a culture is formed that will define for later generations the kinds of leadership it will embrace At this point the culture defines the leadership However, as the group encounters problems in adapting to its environment and reaches a point where some of its assumptions are no longer valid, leadership comes into play again Leadership is now the ability to step outside the culture that created the leader and to start evolutionary change processes that are more adaptive

Schein (1992) asserts that the ultimate challenge for organizational leadership is to be able to perceive the limitations of one's own culture and to develop the culture adaptively (p 2)

How do organizational cultures form?

Schein (1994) posits that the process of forming a culture is similar to forming a group and is the essence of group identity Shared patterns of thought, belief, feelings and values resulting from shared experience and common learning, results in the pattern of shared assumptions which he defines as the culture of a group

According to Schein (1992) cultures stem from three sources 1) the beliefs, values and assumptions of the founders, 2) the learning experiences of group members as their organization evolves, and 3) new beliefs, values and assumptions brought in by new members or leaders. Founders not only choose the basic mission and the environmental context in which the new group will operate, but they have a critical impact on how the group initially defines and solves its external adaptation and internal integration According to Schein (1992), leaders create the culture and managers and administrators live within them (p 5)

How does culture get transmitted?

Schein (.992) discusses six mechanisms, by which founders inculcate their assumptions into the organization Taken together the primary embedding mechanisms create the "climate" of the organization (Schneider 1990,Snein 1992, p 230) At the founding stage the climate is created by the founder leaders and precedes group culture At a later stage climate will be a reflection and manifestation of cultural assumptions

There are six culture embedding mechanisms according to Schein First, what leaders pay attention to, measure and control. This mechanism involves what leaders notice

and comment on, measure, control, reward and in other ways systematically deal with in the organization. Second, leader reactions to critical incidents and organizational crises, creates new norms, values, procedures and expose underlying assumptions of the culture. Even what gets defined as a crisis is a reflection of the culture. Third, observed criteria for resource allocation. Leader beliefs and assumptions are revealed through their organizational budgets. How budgets are created amount of risk, degree to which organizations must be financially self-sufficient strongly influence goals. Fourth, deliberate role modeling, teaching, and coaching refers to leaders as role models whose behavior communicates assumptions and values. Fifth, observed criteria for allocation of rewards and status refers to learning through rewards and punishment, with promotions, evaluations, and conversations with leaders about what the organization values, rewards and punishes. Finally, sixth, is observed criteria for recruitment, selection, promotion, retirement, and excommunication. Selecting new members is a subtle way of embedding culture. Founders tend to find attractive members who resemble present members style, assumptions values and beliefs. These assumptions are reinforced by criteria of who gets promoted, retired early or fired. These mechanisms interact and reinforce each other if the leaders own beliefs are consistent.

The organizational culture perspective is useful in illuminating the why and how organizations grow and change by helping us identify the priority issues for leaders and leadership as they create and manage the culture of the organization. This perspective will be used to analyze the strategies used by the leadership of Aspira in its ongoing struggles for survival and adaptation to the external environment.

Empowerment Perspective

The empowerment literature is relatively new and rapidly evolving.

The concept of empowerment is being discussed by social workers, community psychologists, health educators and others who are concerned with "a culture that promotes social responsibility and social justice, rather than individual satisfaction in isolation from one's community and society " (Wallerstein & Berstein, 1995 p 142)

Israel, et al 1994 states that empowerment, ' in its most general sense, refers to the ability of people to gain understanding and control over personal, social, economic and political forces in order to take action to improve their life situations" (Israel, Checkoway, Schulz, Zimmerman 1994 p 152) "Empowerment suggests that participation with others to achieve goals, efforts to gain access to resources, and some critical understandings of the sociopolitical environment are basis components of the construct" (Perkins & Zimmerman 1995 p 571)

Current empowerment theorists are grappling with ways to measure empowerment at the various levels which thus far have been defined Researchers and practitioners continue to debate the relationships among individual, organizational, and community levels of empowerment, whether the levels can be addressed separately or simultaneously and whether one level leads to another The levels of empowerment which have been identified thus far in the literature include the individual level, interpersonal level, community level and organizational level (Gutierrez 1988, Rappaport 1981, Wallerstein 1994)

Definitions of Levels of Empowerment

For the purpose of this research the following definitions will be utilized

Individual empowerment refers to an individual's ability to make decisions and have control over his or her personal life, developing a sense of personal power. It is similar to the concepts of self efficacy and self esteem (Israel, et al 1994, Gutierrez 1992). Interpersonal empowerment " involves developing the ability to affect others" (qtd. in Gutierrez 1992, p 353).

Organizational empowerment. Empowerment organizations are democratically managed, utilize cooperative decision making , mutually defined goals, they empower at the organizational level and incorporates both processes that enable individuals to increase their control within the organization and the organization to influence policies and decisions in the larger community

Community empowerment

Referring to ethnic community, specifically the focus here is on the Puerto Rican and ethnic community is one in which individuals and organizations apply their skills and resources in a collective efforts to meet their respective needs. Through such participation individuals and organizations within an empowered community provide enhanced support for each other and address conflicts within the community and gain increased influence and control over the quality of life in their community An empowered community has the ability to influence decisions and changes in the larger social system Hence, empowerment at the community level is connected with empowerment at the individual and organizational levels At the community level, empowerment refers to collective action to improve the quality of life in a community and the connections among community organizations (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995)

Ethno-Conscious Services

Lorraine Gutierrez, posits that in order to engage in empowerment practice social service providers must engage in "ethno-conscious services" (Gutierrez 1994 p 353) "Ethno-conscious services are those that attempt to impact all four levels of empowerment with people of color" (Ibid p 331) According to Gutierrez, "ethno-conscious social services are oriented toward empowerment rather than remediation or adjustment of individual clients and can contribute to the creation of organizations that encourage the empowerment of consumers and workers Empowerment based services differ from traditional programs by equalizing the power between service providers and clients, utilizing small groups accepting the client's definition of the problem, identifying and building upon the client's strengths, raising the clients consciousness of issues of class and power, actively involving the client in the change process, teaching specific skills, using mutual aid, self help, or support groups, encouraging clients to exercise their persona, power within the context of the organization, and mobilizing resources or advocating for clients" (qtd in Gutierrez, 1992 p 331)

Ethnic Organizations

Gutierrez 1992, indicates that ethnic agencies emerge from within the ethnic community to address community needs in order to impact community issues and problems In her analysis of ethnic agencies implementing empowerment initiatives like, El Centro, in Seattle and others, Gutierrez's found that their effectiveness is influenced by, "horizontal and vertical ties within the community, as wel. as the strength of their leadership" (Gutierrez, 1992 p 353) In her research she found that the organization has developed strong horizontal ties by involving the community in cultural programs, needs assessments, as volunteers and in agency governance She indicates that these ties have

served as a buffer and has allowed the agency to survive in times of fluctuating financial and political support El Centro, on the vertical level has developed strong ties with funders, state and local governments through networks and political advocacy "As a result it has become more successful in receiving financial support for programs and services while maintaining a role as an advocate for the ethnic minority population in Seattle" (Ibid p 353)

The empowerment literature provides a framework for identifying the variables which need to be considered in assessing the empowerment processes and outcomes of organizations I will look at these areas in examining the extent to which ASPIRA has been able to empower the Puerto Rican/Latino community

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CHAPTER III

METHODS

Design of the Study

The study of ASPIRA will be carried out as an historical, analytical case study of the evolution of the organization as a whole, with a focus on two local associate offices, and the national office. The two local associate offices are, Aspira, Inc of New York, and Aspira, Inc of New Jersey, offices. The national office is located in Washington, D C.

The organization will be analyzed both locally and nationally in relation to structure, function and process, mission and goals, leadership, and culture, and its general and task environment. It will examine the major social, political, economic and cultural forces that have influenced its organizational adaptation and effectiveness in surviving over the past 35 years.

The design of the study will be a qualitative case study. However, quantitative data will be used to provide insight on various issues such as trends in budgets, allocation of funds, clients served, types of programs, and levels of government and foundation support over time. Descriptive statistics will be used, inferential statistics will not be computed.

Babbie (1995) has described qualitative research as an important tool in social work research that has a long an distinguished history. He noted that such techniques are appropriate for the study of organizations. Data will be collected using interviews with key informants inside and outside of the organization, review of organizational records, files, videotapes, newspapers, government documents, and foundation reports. Primary sources will be used as available, however secondary sources will also be used.

Sampling

The sampling technique to be used is purposive sampling. According to Babbie (1995), purposive sampling is when a sample is constructed to provide the researcher the most comprehensive understanding of the subject under study based upon the intuitive feel for the subject derived from extensive observation and reflection. The sample will be of persons who have served as executive directors, members of the board, and professional staff of Aspira, as well as outsiders who have knowledge of the organization. The "snow balling" technique will be used. Each respondent will be asked if they can name others who they believe could shed light on the organization and these will be contacted and interviewed as well. To the extent possible sample will be include a minimum of two key persons, from each organizational stage, from each office, N Y, N J and National. The list of potential respondents includes, but is not limited to the following.

Table/List of Potential Respondents

Name	Position	Dates
Antonia Pantoja	Executive Director-**N.Y.**	1961-1965
Hernan la Fontaine	Program Director -**N.Y.**	1961
Franciso Trilla, MD	Chairperson, Board of Directors-**N.Y.**	1966
Frank Negron	Executive Director-**NY**	1966-67
Gilberto Ortiz, MD	Chairperson, Board of Directors-**Nat'l**	1966-67
Luis Nunez	Executive Director **Nat'l**	1967-72
Teodoro Moscoso	Member, National Development Committee-**Nat'l**	1968-1969
Wilfredo Gonzalez	Development Officer **Nat'l**	1972
Luis Alvarez	Executive Director **Nat'l**	1972 1976
Mario Anglada	National Director **N.Y.**	1976 1980
Juan Rosario	**National** Executive Director-& **N.J.**	1980-1983
Janice Petrovich	**National** Executive Director	1986-1995
Ronald Blackburn Moreno	**National** Executive Director	1996-present

Plan of the Study

Using a chronology, the analysis will be divided into three phases based on pivota. historical events. Those phases will be analyzed in each of the three Aspira settings as well as, overall, (as a whole- Aspira organization), and in the interplay between the associate offices and the national office

- **The founding and development phase** Phase I will cover the period 1961 to 1971
  Defined as period of the founder. This stage will be considered the *baseline*. Al.
  changes and adaptations will be analyzed against the organizations baseline (original),
  structure, mission and goals, leadership, function and process. It was during this period
  that the New York, National and New Jersey associate offices were formed

- **National development/political power phase** Phase II will cover period 1972 to
  1983. By 1972 there was a change in leadership and by 1983 a pivotal move of the
  National Office to Washington, D.C. to establish a presence in the nation's capital

- **Struggle for redefinition phase** Phase III will cover period from 1984 to present. At
  this phase the organization attempts to redefine itself, reexamine its mission and
  reassess its current and future direction

Method of Analysis

For each phase, and for each site in the organization history, I will

1   Describe the key issues in the general environment, including the relevant social,
    economic, political, and cultural characteristics for each period, as well as the key
    members of the task environment (other organizations and groups with which the
    organization is involved), see tables on the following pages.

    Variables for each construct are described in data analysis section

    Using a critical incident, (or several incidents), I will analyze

    a.   the change and or adaptation made in the organization's affected
            dimension(s) structure, function, process, mission and goals and how they all
            work together, and

            b) the strategies the leadership of the organization uses to control and
            impact these forces

CHART 1

ASPIRA NEW YORK
Organizational Dimensions/Internal Lens

INTERNAL ORGANIZATIONAL DIMENSIONS	ORIGINAL Founding and Development PHASE I 1961-1971	NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLITICAL POWER PHASE II 1972-1983	STRUGGLE FOR REDEFINITION PHASE III 1984-PRESENT	DATA SOURCES
Mission and Goals	Original Mission Statement and List of Goals Priorities as indicated by budget allocations	Changes from Phase I, transition, critical incidents	Changes from earlier phases, present condition	Organization documents, annual report by-laws, budgets, interviews
Structure	Organizational chart, number of its clubs program sites, major divisions and units	Changes from Phase I, transition, critical incidents	Changes from earlier phases present condition	Organization documents, annual report by-laws, interviews
Function/Processes	Main pattern of high level decision making: strategy formulation and planning, goal setting, types of programs	Changes from Phase I, transition, critical, incidents	Changes from earlier phases present condition	Organization documents, annual report, by-laws, budgets, interviews, board minutes
Culture	How programs are conducted Organizational culture. How work gets done. What norms belief, symbols and rituals are shared	Changes from Phase I, transition, critical, incidents	Changes from earlier phases, present condition	Organization documents annual report by laws, budgets, interviews
Leadership	Role and functions of organizational leadership What strategies they use to mobilize resources, priorities. Executive Director Assistant Director Director's of Centers Size and composition of Board of Directors	Changes from Phase I, transition critical incidents	Changes from earlier phases, present condition	Organization documents annual report by-laws, budgets, interviews

CHART 1A
ASPIRA NATIONAL
Organizational Dimensions/Internal Lens

INTERNAL ORGANIZATIONAL DIMENSIONS	ORIGINAL Founding and Development PHASE I 1968-1971	NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT POLITICAL POWER PHASE II 1972-1983	STRUGGLE FOR REDEFINITION PHASE III 1984-PRESENT	DATA SOURCES
Mission and Goals	Original Mission Statement and List of Goals. Priorities as indicated by budget allocations	Changes from Phase I transition, critical incidents	Changes from earlier phases, present condition	Organization documents, annual report, by-laws, budgets, interviews
Structure	Organizational chart, number of its clubs program sites, major divisions and units	Changes from Phase I, transition, critical incidents	Changes from earlier phases present condition	Organization documents annual report, by-laws interviews
Function Processes	Main pattern of high level, decision making, strategy formulation and planning, goal setting, types of programs	Changes from Phase I, transition, critical incidents	Changes from earlier phases, present condition	Organization on documents, annual report, by laws budgets interviews, board minutes
Culture	How programs are conducted. Organizational culture. How work gets done. What norms belief, symbols and rituals are shared	Changes from Phase I, transition, critical incidents	Changes from earlier phases, present condition	Organization documents, annual report by-laws budgets interviews
Leadership	Role and functions of organizational, leadership What strategies they use to mobilize resources priorities Executive Director Assistant Director Director's of Centers Size and composition of Board of Directors	Changes from Phase I transition, critical incidents	Changes from earlier phases, present condition	Organization documents, annual report, by-laws, budgets, interviews

CHART 1B

ASPIRA NEW JERSEY
Organizational Dimensions/Internal Lens

INTERNAL ORGANIZATIONAL DIMENSIONS	ORIGINAL Founding and Development PHASE I 1969-1971	NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT/ POLITICAL POWER PHASE II 1972-1983	STRUGGLE FOR REDEFINITION PHASE III 1984-PRESENT	DATA SOURCES
Mission and Goals	Original Mission Statement and List of Goals Priorities as indicated by budget allocations	Changes from Phase I transition, critical incidents	Changes from earlier phases, present condition	Organization documents, annual report, by-laws, budgets, interviews
Structure	Organizational chart, number of its clubs program sites, major divisions and units	Changes from Phase I, transition, critical incidents I	Changes from earlier phases, present condition	Organization documents, annual report, by-laws, interviews
Function/Processes	Main pattern of high level decision making, strategy formulation and planning goal setting, types of programs	Changes from Phase I transition, critical incidents	Changes from earlier phases, present condition	Organization documents, annual report, by-laws, budgets, interviews board minutes
Culture	How programs are conducted Organizational culture How work gets done What norms belief, symbols and rituals are shared	Changes from Phase I, transition, critical incidents	Changes from earlier phases, present condition	Organization documents, annual report, by-laws, budgets, interviews
Leadership	Role and functions of organizational leadership What strategies they use to mobilize resources practices Executive Director Assistant Director Director s of Centers Size and composition of Board of Directors	Changes from Phase I transition, critical incidents I	Changes from earlier phases, present condition	Organization documents, annual report, by-laws, budgets, interviews

CHART 2

ASPIRA
VARIABLES

GENERAL ENVIRONMENT

SITE	SOCIAL	ECONOMIC	CULTURAL	POLITICAL
New York	Demographic data, size Hispanic population, country of origin, race, age, education levels, income data (New York City and State)	Local government and foundation funding availability; sources program funds, general economic climate, recession, local economic trends, etc.	Media portrayal of Latino issues around education and politics. Coverage of Aspira (local and state)	Political positions of elected officials on education of Hispanics, city government level, mayor, city council, state legislators, governor
National	Demographic data, size Hispanic population country of origin, race, age, education data for country and cities where associate offices are located.	General national economic climate, i.e., recession, funding availability; sources of program funds, government and foundation funding availability national level	Media portrayal of Latino issues around education and politics. Coverage of Aspira (National Level)	National Federal level, senate and congress. On national level and states where Aspira runs programs
New Jersey	Demographic data, size Hispanic population, country of origin, race, age, educational levels, income data for Newark and other cities where New Jersey runs programs. comparison with State of New Jersey	Local economic trends Local government and foundation funding availability sources program funds, general economic climate recession, local economic trends, etc	Media portrayal of Latino issues around education and politics. Coverage of Aspira (local and state) New Jersey state and local level.	Political positions of elected officials on education of Hispanics, city government level, mayor, city council, state legislators, governor on and state local levels
Data Source	Census 60's, 70's, 80's and 90's	Business Week, Wall Street Journal, New York Times, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Department of Labor (DOL)	Time Magazine Newsweek, New York Times	US News and World Report Washington Post New York Times

CHART 3
ASPIRA

TASK ENVIRONMENT
Providers of:

	FISCAL RESOURCES	LEGITIMATION AND AUTHORITY	CLIENTS	COMPLEMENTARY SERVICES	CONSUMERS	COMPETITORS
New York	City, state, corporations, foundations, private, national office funding	Schools, colleges, funders, community groups national office media	School, colleges, community groups	Schools, colleges, community groups	Latino students, parents community groups	Other Latino organizations, other community based organizations CBO's
National	Foundations, corporations, private funding	Funders, local associates, professional associations, media	State Aspira Associate offices	Other national ethnic organizations	State Aspira Associate offices	Other national Latino and ethnic national organizations
New Jersey	City, state, corporations, foundations, private, national office funding	School, colleges, funders, community groups national office, media	Schools, colleges community groups	Schools, colleges community groups	Latino students, parents community group	Other Latino organizations, other CBO's

Data Analysis

As the organization evolves over time, its changes and adaptations will be analyzed through critical incidents using the environmental and organizational dimensions specified.

General Environment

The environment of an organization can be divided into two categories. The first category is the *general environment* and the second is the *task environment* (Hall, 1977, Hasenfeld, 1983). The general (societal) environment consists of the conditions in the environment including the social, economic, political, and cultural dimensions.

The dimensions of the general environment will be examined on two levels. I will examine them on a national level and on a local level in the areas where Aspira has its local organizations. This information will provide the historical framework for analysis of the organization on its organizational dimensions and its interorganizational interactions at each stage in its development.

Variables from the General Environment

The following variables of the general environment will be examined for each stage, and on a national and statewide level for each of the Aspira associates to be examined.

1   Social conditions including the following demographic data, population, Puerto Ricans, Hispanics and others, age, education levels, and income data.

2   Economic conditions general economic climate, government and foundation funding availability for social programs, including education

3   Political conditions the general political climate of the society, the political

positions of elected officials on education of Hispanics on the various levels

4   Cultural conditions media coverage and portrayal of Hispanic/Latino issues
around education, and political issues, i e bilingual education, attitude toward
"immigrants"

Task (Specific Interorganizational) Environment

The task environment of Aspira will also be examined and analyzed on a national
and on a local level   The task environment includes the set of external organizations and
groups that directly control access to potential and actual resources for the organization,
groups with which the organization exchanges resources, services, and with which it
interacts This may include funding sources, referral agencies, consumers, and providers
of complementary services It includes an organization's competitors and collaborators
The characteristics of the task environment are affected by the general environment

Variables from the Task Environment

According to Hall (1983), the task environment includes six major sectors   These
are the variables of the Task Environment for the study

1   Providers of fiscal resources Governmental, foundation, and public and private
agencies and donors on which the organization depends for financial support

2   Providers of legitimation and authority Schools and colleges where students are
placed, funding sources both governmental and private that evaluate the program,
politicians and professional groups that support the organization, relationships
with other Aspira associates and the National office, professional schools that
place who place interns at Aspira

3   Providers of clients High schools, colleges, professional and trade schools,

educational organizations, social service organizations, and community groups

4 Providers of complementary services Other national and local Latino agencies, schools, colleges, and post-secondary schools

5 National and local consumers and recipients of products and services Latino youth, students and parents, and community groups

6 Competing organizations Other Latino and ethnic organizations, schools, and other competitors

Organizational Dimensions Internal Lens

The organizational dimensions to be assessed include the organization's structure, function and processes, mission and goals, leadership and culture In order to assess change over time, the original organization at the founding and development stage will be described as the baseline the changes in each following stage will be noted

Variables Organizational Structure/Internal Lens

In order to assess the influence of the environment on the organization the following specific measures will be used

1 Structure How was the organization structured originally? How has the structure changed over time? What were the reasons given for the changes in structure? What does the organizational chart look like? How has the organizational chart changed over time? What are the staff roles and responsibilities? How have they changed over time? Why did they change? How is Aspira governed? How has governance changed over time? Why were changes in governance instituted?

2 Process/Function What programs has Aspira operated? How are the programs implemented? Who runs the programs? How is the leadership selected? Who

participates in the programs? How is planning, problem solving, decision making, goal setting and information sharing done? How are priorities determined? How have the programs changed over time? Why have they changed?

3   Mission and Goals   What were the original mission and goals of the organization?   How have the programs reflected the mission and goals? What changes have there been in the mission and goals? How has the organization attempted to reach its objectives?

4   Culture   What is the organizational culture?   How does the work get done? What norms, values, beliefs, symbols and rituals are shared in the organization?

5   Leadership.   What is the role of the organizational leadership?   Who is the leadership? Where do they come from? What strategies do they use to mobilize resources?

Data Sources

Data will be obtained from four sources   1) Official Government data including U S Census data and Bureau of Labor Statistics, Department of Labor data, 2) Scholarly and journalistic studies of decades of the 1960, 1970s 1980s, and 1990s, 3) the archives of Aspira and 4) interviews of important players and knowledgeable outsiders in the history and development of the organization

1) Official Government data

U S Census data from the 60s, 70s, 80s and 90's , and Bureau of Labor Statistics, Department of Labor data will be compared at each stage of the organization's development to describe changes in key demographic variables

2) Scholarly and Journalistic Sources

Numerous contemporary and retrospective scholarly and journalistic reports exist on the period between 1950 and the present. Straight forward reportage on contemporary events will be gathered from newspapers of record such as *The New York Times* and the *Washington Post* and from *Newsweek*, *U S News and World Report* and *Time Magazine*. Economic trends will be gathered through the sampling of *Business Week* News weeklies will be sampled using their "Year in Review" editions. Social histories of the period will also be examined.

3) Archival Sources

Archival sources will include correspondence, internal and external documents, printed reports, studies, newsletters, speeches, proposals, budgets, personnel manuals, annual reports, videotapes, newspapers and other relevant materials. minutes of meetings including minutes of Board meetings, program documentation and miscellaneous documents from two local Aspira offices (Aspira, Inc. of New York, and Aspira Inc. of New Jersey) and the Aspira National Office. These sites were selected for their length of time in existence and historical importance. Aspira, Inc. of New York is the founding organization, and the birthplace of the National Association (federation), and the Aspira, Inc. of New Jersey, is the second associate office to be created Researcher access to these offices was also a major selection factor.

4) Interviews

Interviews of key informants including the current and former Executive Directors, board members, professional staff, the Directors of Education, National ASPIRA Association, and external informants will be conducted by the researcher External informants include other organization directors, founders, local government officials, and other key external persons A minimum of 20 key informants representing a cross section of both the organizational sites, and internal and external persons will be interviewed Interviews with key informants will be tape recorded and transcribed

Interview Schedules

Executive directors, present and former, will be interviewed using the Executive Director Interview Schedule (EDIS), which consists of four preliminary items (name, date and time, granting of permission to audiotape, and time of tenure in office), and 12 substantive questions Interviewees will be asked to discuss the general social climate when they were in office, generally characterize the organizational climate when they were directors, describe the organization when they became executive director, when their term of office ended, and the changes in-between, major problems and accomplishments, who their funding sources were at that time, other organizations that they competed with or were in conflict with, and their perceptions of the impact that Aspira had on social policy A copy of the EDIS is in Appendix A

Staff members will be interviewed using the Staff Member Interview Schedule (SMIS) which is similarly constructed to the EDIS, with the items slightly reworded so that it would make sense to them For example, on Question 1, the EDIS reads, "When you were executive director of Aspira " was changed to, "When you were with Aspira " on the SMIS Otherwise, the items were the same The outside informants

were interviewed using the Outside Informant Interview Schedule (OIIS). Items were similar to those on the EDIS and the SMIS. However, items were reworded so that the focus of the items were from an outside perspective. Item 8, What would you consider Aspira's most serious problems when you were with the organization? How did Aspira attempt to solve them? How successful was Aspira in solving them?" was not asked of outsiders, since it was thought that they would not have accurate insight on those issues. On all three interview schedules, items were carefully worded so that respondents were asked about those aspects of Aspira with which they had personal knowledge.

Coding

Utilizing the Ethnograph software program interviews and pertinent organizational documents will be entered and coded. Documents will be coded using both dates (corresponding to the organizational stages), as well as, site or office in order to organize the data. Analyses will be run and thematic and contextual codes will be determined to be used in the analysis.

Codes will also be used to identify concepts - both substantive and theoretical. For example funding sources, programs staffing, Board of Directors structural and physical changes, leadership changes, collaborations, coalitions, loss of programs, miss on and goals and culture.

Validity and Reliability

In order to ensure validity and reliability, I will utilize the method of triangulation in verifying the data. The method of triangulation calls for the use of multiple sources of data or multiple methods to confirm the emerging findings (Merriam, 1988). The researcher in order to ensure validity and reliability of the data will follow Yin's (1994) and Merriam's (1988) recommendation to have informants review a draft of the written transcripts of the interviews for accuracy and interpretation. Second, all data collected from informants will be verified by additional sources including written documents collected from agency files or records or a second outside source, such as a report from funding source, newspaper report, publication, or verbal report from another informant.

Limitations of the Study

Data collection for the study will rely heavily on existing records and interviews of key informants. To the extent the files are complete, gaps will be filled by tracing key informants involved at the time or the period in question. To the extent these recollections are colored by other events or the passing of time the accounts, will be verified by other sources to the extent possible. The focus of the study will be on two local Aspira offices and the National office the other associate offices will only be included as necessary to document the history and shed light on various issues. These other Associate offices have rich histories of their own that should be written. Since this is a qualitative study, variables will not be standardized and data reportage may contain biases of respondents and the researcher even though consensual validation will be attempted. All statistical data will be derived from the files of Aspira and will not have

any outside verification Only descriptive statistical data will be reported Because this is

a case study, the generalizability of the findings will be extremely limited and will reflect

the unique experiences of Aspira

Timetable

The key sites for the study are in New York City Newark, New Jersey and

Washington, D C The study will take eight months commencing March 1999 to

November 1999

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Appendices

Executive Director Interview Schedule

Preliminaries

1. Name

2. Date

3. Permission to tape interview

4. Tenure in Executive Director Position

Questions

1. During your tenure as Executive Director of Aspira, how would you describe the political climate of the U.S.? The economic situation? The cultural climate?

2. Could you briefly describe Aspira as an organization when you assumed the executive directorship? How many association offices were there? What were the major programs? Who were the major players?

3. What were the major changes during your tenure? Who were the major players? What were the major initiatives? What did you see as your most important goals?

4. How would you characterize Aspira at the end of your tenure? How many association offices were there? What were the major programs? Who were the major players?

5. What were your major funding sources? How were those funds spent? What other organizations did you collaborate and cooperate with?

6. What organizations were you competing with?

7. What organizations were you in conflict with?

8. What would you consider your most serious problems when you were executive director? How did you attempt to solve them? How successful were you in solving them?

9. During your tenure, what was your most important accomplishment?

10. How has Aspira empowered the Puerto Rican community?

11. When you were executive director, what impact do you think that Aspira had on public policy?

12. Is there anything else that you think I might need to know to understand Aspira? Is there anything else that you would like to add before we conclude?

Staff Member Interview Schedule

<u>Preliminaries</u>

1. Name

2. Date

3. Permission to tape interview

4. Tenure as staff member in Aspira

<u>Questions</u>

1. When you were with Aspira, how would you describe the political climate of the U.S.? The economic situation? The cultural climate?

2. Could you briefly describe Aspira as an organization when you worked for it? How many association offices were there? What were the major programs? Who were the major players?

3. What were the major changes during the time you were employed by Aspira? Who were the major players? What were the major initiatives? What did you see as Aspira's most important goals?

4. How would you characterize Aspira when you left? How many association offices were there? What were the major programs? Who were the major players?

5. What were the major funding sources of Aspira? How were those funds spent? What other organizations did Aspira collaborate and cooperate with?

6. What organizations was Aspira competing with?

7. What organizations was Aspira in conflict with?

8. What would you consider Aspira's most serious problems when you were with the organization? How did Aspira attempt to solve them? How successful was Aspira in solving them?

9. When you were with Aspira, what was your most important accomplishment?

10. How has Aspira empowered the Puerto Rican community?

11. When you were with Aspira, what impact do you think that Aspira had on public policy?

12. Is there anything else that you think that I might need to know to understand Aspira? Is there anything else that you would like to add before we conclude?

Outside Informant Interview Schedule

Preliminaries

1.   Name

2.   Date

3.   Permission to tape interview

4.   Length of time respondent interacted with Aspira.

Questions

1. How did you learn (hear) about Aspira? What did you expect it to be like?

2. When you were involved with Aspira, how would you describe the political climate of the U.S.? The economic situation? The cultural climate?

3. Could you briefly describe Aspira as an organization when you were involved with it? How many association offices were there? What were the major programs? Who were the major players?

4. What were the major changes during the time you were involved with Aspira? Who were the major players? What were the major initiatives? What did you see as Aspira's most important goals?

5. How would you characterize Aspira when you ceased being involved with Aspira? How many association offices were there? What were the major programs? Who were the major players?

6. What organizations was Aspira competing with?

7. What organizations was Aspira in conflict with?

8. What would you consider Aspira's most serious problems when you were involved with the organization? How did Aspira attempt to solve them? How successful was Aspira in solving them?

9. When you involved with Aspira, what was their most important accomplishment?

10. How has Aspira empowered the Puerto Rican community?

11. When you involved with Aspira, what impact do you think that they had on public policy?

12. Is there anything else that you think I might need to know to understand Aspira? Is there anything else that you would like to add before we conclude?